

In Memory  
of the late  
Hon. William Costello Kennedy  
P.C., M.P.

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OF YEARS, MEMORY WILL GILD NONE BRIGHTER  
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COLLEAGUE TO WHOM THIS BROCHURE IS AFFECTION-  
ATELY DEDICATED

*Geo. M. Rose*



## WILLIAM COSTELLO KENNEDY

(1868—1923)



THE death of Hon. William Costello Kennedy which occurred on Jan. 17th., 1923, came as a shock to Canadian communities from the Atlantic to the Pacific Occans. It brought sorrow not only to a multitude of personal friends and acquaintances, but to thousands who had never seen him, yet who recognized in him a statesman of high promise, whose services Canada could ill afford to lose. His political career,—extending over a period of little more than five years,—had been as brilliant as it was brief, and his rise to national distinction as a public man had been so rapid as to constitute a record in Canadian affairs. That such a man should be called by death was an incident so fraught with tragic significance as to move political friends and opponents alike to expressions of regret, and to evoke similar expressions from the entire newspaper press of Canada. It goes without saying that Mr. Kennedy could not have so quickly won so outstanding a position in public affairs, if he had not combined with first rate abilities, high personal character, and a nature of that warm, sympathetic type which wins friendship.

In the ensuing pages will be found some of many tributes which were paid to his memory by the public men and the leading newspapers of Canada. To have included all would have extended them to a length too great for a memorial *brochure* of this character. These spoken and written tributes,—the words of a few, may speak for many others who loved, admired and respected the late Mr. Kennedy, but have not enjoyed the means of expression. It has been thought well to preface these tributes with a brief recital of the facts of his career.

The late William Costello Kennedy was born at Ottawa on August 27th., 1868, the son of William and Julia (Costello) Kennedy. While he was still a young lad his father received an appointment in the civil service of Ontario, which entailed the removal of the family to Toronto, and it was in that city he was educated. Owing to his father's connection with



public service he was as a boy privileged to hear many debates in the Ontario Legislature at a time when oratorical standards were much higher than they are to-day, and when many of the most brilliant forensic orators of the country were members of that body. Undoubtedly the experiences thus obtained in his impressionable years assisted him as a public speaker when in middle age he entered on a political career. At the same time he received a sound education in the Roman Catholic Separate Schools and at De la Salle Institute, Toronto.

His business career began in 1887, when he became a clerk in the offices of the London and Canadian Loan and Agency Company of Toronto,—at that time one of the leading financial corporations of the province. With this company he remained until his twenty-ninth year when he accepted an offer to go to Windsor, Ont., and enter the offices of the Windsor Gas Company. At that time he was a total stranger to the community of which he was destined to become the most eminent figure. His aptitude and popularity in his new post proved so remarkable that in six years,—by 1903 to be exact,—he had risen to the position of President of the Company. At the same time he developed other commercial interests on both sides of the Detroit River. Until his fortieth year strict attention to business prevented him taking a very active part in public affairs: but in 1909 he was elected President of the Windsor Board of Trade for a term of two years. From 1913 to 1918 he was a member of the Windsor Board of Education and during the same period a member of the council for the neighboring municipality of Ojibway.

Though he took no active part in politics Mr. Kennedy from boyhood had been attached to the Liberal party; and in 1917 when Sir Robert Borden, at that time Premier of Canada, formed a Union Government and announced his intention of imposing conscription without submitting the question to the people through the medium of a referendum, he was one of the Liberals who stood back of the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier in opposing such a policy. When the general elections were announced, Mr. Kennedy, though at the time

it was supposed that he was facing almost certain defeat, accepted the Liberal nomination for the riding of North Essex. The political history of the riding largely leaned toward the Conservative side and Mr. Kennedy was opposed by Col. Wigle, generally regarded as a strong candidate. In the two months campaign that ensued, Mr. Kennedy made many friends by his sane and reasonable methods of electioneering; and by the sincerity with which he met charges of disloyalty, which, in that rancorous campaign, were hurled at all the supporters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The result was that when the ballots were counted on the night of Dec. 17th., 1917, he was elected by a handsome majority of the resident electorate. When the returns of the balloting by soldiers on active service overseas were made known,—a factor on which his opponent as a military man, had counted,—the result was unaffacted and Mr. Kennedy went to Ottawa for the session of 1918 with a majority of 446.

The election, as a whole, had left Sir Wilfrid Laurier with a very small following in English speaking provinces; and one especially weak in ability to handle financial issues. Sir Thomas White the then Minister of Finance had been obliged to take a vacation on account of ill-health, and the task of preparing the formidable budget of the last year of the war had fallen to Hon. A. K. Maclean, of Halifax, a Liberal who had parted company with Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the conscription issue. At Sir Wilfrid's request the task of acting as financial critic was undertaken by the young and untried parliamentarian from Windsor, Ont. Avoiding rancorous or demagogic appeals Mr. Kennedy made a speech which because of its able analysis of the financial condition of Canada, made a marked impression not only on his political colleagues in the opposition seats, but on the members in the government benches also. From that day it was realized that an important factor in the future of the Liberal party had arisen in the person of Mr. Kennedy.

The subsequent death of Sir Wilfrid Laurier, which occurred early in 1919, raised the question of the future leadership of the party; and in the parleys prior to the party

convention held in the summer of that year the counsel of Mr. Kennedy was eagerly sought, even by old campaigners who had been many years in political life. After the election of Hon. William Lyon Mackenzie King to the post of leader of the Liberal party, a close and confidential friendship arose between the two.

In 1921 changes also ensued in the leadership of the Unionist-Conservative party. Sir Robert Borden retired from the office of Prime Minister and Hon. Arthur Meighen with whom despite divergent political views, Mr. Kennedy enjoyed friendly relations, became his successor. The new Prime Minister called a general election for Dec. 19th, 1921, almost precisely four years after the preceding one; and throughout the autumn of that year, Mr. Kennedy was very active in organizing his party for victory. Hon. W. L. M. King placed much reliance on his advice and it was commonly reported that he had a hand in framing those declarations of policy which resulted in a very severe defeat for the Meighen administration. In his own riding of North Essex he scored a most decisive triumph. The majority of 446 achieved in 1917 was increased to the phenomenal total of 7,195,—as great a demonstration of personal popularity as was ever recorded in Canadian politics,—proving as it did that thousands of individuals, nominally of Conservative leanings, had voted for him on personal grounds.

From the day when it was announced that Hon. W. L. M. King would be entrusted with the task of forming a cabinet, it was known that Mr. Kennedy would be a member of it, because of his services as a personal adviser to that leader. The new Prime Minister proved his confidence by asking his friend to undertake what was at the time the most difficult portfolio in the government, the Ministry of Railways and Canals. It is needless to recite the highly complicated questions arising from the transfer of something like 20,000 miles of railroad from private to public ownership. It was this task that Mr. Kennedy assumed and out of the difficulties involved, it was his duty to devise a working plan of co-ordinated effort which would give hope of a profitable future



for the plan. He was sworn in as Minister on Dec. 29th., 1921, and on January 19th, returned for a third time by his constituents in North Essex,—this time by acclamation.

Almost from the day of his assuming office, symptoms of an internal malady showed themselves, but the next seven months were spent in as unselfish devotion to public service as were ever recorded to the honor of a public man, and by August the plan of uniting all government owned railroads under a single head, which later was implemented by the appointment of Sir Henry Thornton, was complete. Early in August the long strain he had been under told on him so severely that he entered the Royal Victoria Hospital, Montreal, where it was decided by specialists that an operation was necessary. This proved only partially successful and on Sept. 20th., 1922, a second operation advised by specialists from John Hopkins University, Baltimore, was performed. This proved so salutary as to give hope of permanent recovery. Mr. Kennedy rested for the next three months and then went with his wife and physician to spend the winter at Naples, Florida, fully expecting that by spring he would be a well man. He was in a happy, optimistic mood on his last day on earth. In the evening he was stricken with heart failure and died after a short interval.

The wave of sorrow and sympathy for his bereaved wife that passed over Canada upon receipt of the news, following on advice that the Minister of Railways was well advanced toward recovery, is indicated in the following pages. The body was brought to Windsor and on January 24th a state funeral was held, requiem mass being celebrated in St. Alphonsus Church and interment taking place in St. Alphonsus Cemetery. It was attended by Col. J. B. Rogers, A.D.C., representing His Excellency, Lord Byng, Governor-General of Canada; the Prime Minister, Rt.-Hon. W. L. M. King; Hon. W. S. Fielding, Hon. Sir Lomer Gouin, Hon. G. P. Graham, Hon. Charles Murphy, Hon. A. B. Copp, Hon. Jacques Bureau, Hon. D. D. McKenzie, Hon. Thomas A. Low, Hon. Charles Stewart, Hon. W. R. Motherwell, Hon. James Murdoek, Rt.-Hon. Arthur Meighen, Leader of the Opposition;

Hon. Fred F. Pardee, and Hon. Archie McCoig, representing the Senate; Hon. Manning Doherty, representing the Ontario Legislature, and prominent citizens from many parts of Canada as well as the neighboring city of Detroit. Many members of the Roman Catholic clergy assisted in the celebration of mass and an eloquent oration was delivered by Rev. Father Coughlin. Vast throngs lined the streets along which the cortege passed and also paid the tribute of respect to the body as it lay in state at Windsor Armouries on the day prior to the funeral.

The following additional facts with regard to Mr. Kennedy will give completeness to his life story. His marriage was a singularly happy one, and occurred on May 8th, 1907, when he espoused Miss Glencora Bolton, daughter of George W. Bolton of Detroit. In both his social and political life, his wife was a perfect helpmeet and materially assisted him in his ambitions. His social relations on both sides of the Detroit River were wide. He was First Grand Knight of the Windsor Council, Knights of Columbus, and a member of The Detroit Club, the Detroit Athletic Club, the Windsor Club, the Essex County Golf and Country Club, the Ontario Club, Toronto, and the Rideau Club, Ottawa.

Although the late Mr. Kennedy's years of achievement in business enterprise and public affairs were spent in Windsor and latterly in Ottawa, there are many Torontonians of middle age who recall him in those formative years which were spent in the Ontario capital. Recalling the W. C. Kennedy of the nineties he appears as a young man of singularly well-balanced life. While forming those sound business habits and ideals which bore such exceptional fruit in his later career, he had also time for play and was one of the prime movers in clean athletic sports of a distinctively Canadian character. His splendid physique especially fitted him for aquatics and he was one of the best known amateur oarsmen of his city, and a member of the senior four-oar crew of the old Toronto Rowing Club. His great interest in rowing made him the personal friend of all the eminent Canadian oarsmen of a quarter of a century ago, when the sport was at



its very zenith in this country. He also took a deep interest in lacrosse, and was one of the founders and for a time President of the Tecumseh Lacrosse Club, and himself wielded "the stick" with skill. The sportsmanlike qualities in which years to come made him so forceful, courteous and clean as a political fighter, were well in evidence in those days. In very truth it may be said that in all the many organizations to which he belonged during his lifetime, Mr. Kennedy won unfailing popularity by his resolute, straight-forward character and rooted geniality of temperament.



# TRIBUTES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

*(Excerpts from Hansard)*



JANUARY 31st., 1923 was made the occasion of memorial references in the House of Commons to members of that body who had died in the interval between the previous session and the opening of Parliament. Mr. Kennedy was the most prominent of these, and the following tributes were paid to him in the course of the proceedings by Rt.-Hon. W. L. M. King, Prime Minister of Canada, Rt.-Hon. Arthur Meighen, ex-Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative Party and Robert Forke M.P. for Brandon, leader of the Progressive Party.

## MR. KING

“The last to be taken from this side of the House was the Honourable Mr. Kennedy, Minister of Railways and Canals. Mr. Kennedy’s death is so recent, and has come so near to all of us who were his colleagues in the Government, that it is not possible to speak of the loss it has occasioned without emotion. That he is no longer with us is due, beyond all question, to the fidelity and tenacity with which, at great risk to his health, and as it has now proved, at the peril of his life, he held to his post of duty at a time when the business of his department demanded close and continuous attention. To his colleagues in the Government, and to myself in particular, Mr. Kennedy’s death has occasioned profound sorrow.

Mr. Kennedy was elected to Parliament as the member for North Essex at the general elections of 1917. He was returned in the general election of 1921. Few men have entered upon public life with more promise of, and even fewer, in so short a time, have won and merited so great distinction. With early manhood still on his side, his rare organizing genius and business ability had established him in a position of independence, where it was possible for him to place virtually the whole of his time and his talents at the service of the State. His generous nature, social disposition and known integrity, combined with his business and political sagacity, had gained

for him not only hosts of personal friends and the confidence of his fellow townsmen and constituents, but the high regard of his fellow members in Parliament and the esteem of the citizens of our country generally. His administration of the affairs of the Department of Railways and Canals revealed a positive genius for the work of government. He seemed to possess the very qualities most needed: untiring energy, undaunted courage, high integrity, sound judgment and vision. All of that is now lost to Canada, in whose service he died. In a very true sense his death is a national loss. He was in every way worthy of the many tributes paid his memory from one end of our country to the other.

There is but one thing left to be done by those of us who loved and honoured him, and that is to emulate his courage, to take up our public tasks with renewed vigour and devotion, that the spirit which he exemplified so bravely may be kept alive in our midst."

#### MR. MEIGHEN

"Hon. W. C. Kennedy's death adds another to the honour roll—now one of considerable length, of Canadian Ministers of the Crown who have died in office. For a long time he waged with conspicuous bravery an almost hopeless battle, and in the conduct of it he drew to himself the admiring sympathy of everyone, both friend and foe. The tribute paid to him by his fellow countrymen last week in the city of Windsor where the funeral service was followed by mourning multitudes; the warm, glowing, earnest eulogy of the Prime Minister this afternoon—these testify to the worth of the former Minister of Railways more fittingly and more impressively than I can do. But this I can say with the fullest assurance—no man could have fallen out of the ranks of the foe whose death would seem to us more like the loss of a friend. Mr. Kennedy was a man born to success—success not alone in some specialized form, the attainment of which in these times is a great life's work, but he reached success in every form that answers to the aspirations of a wholesome rounded man. In business he was farsighted and enterprising; he marched right through from humble beginnings to substantial wealth. In social life

his very presence seemed to be all that was necessary to make him friends, he won his way just by the warmth of a genial personality. In politics his rise was phenomenally rapid. In domestic life he was singularly happy. And all these successes, in the case of a man of Mr. Kennedy's mould, could be carried without exciting the envy of any one. He seemed to move in a perpetual atmosphere of comradeship and goodwill. His death is a distinct loss to this House, and I can well understand the feelings of the Prime Minister that his place in the councils of the Government, as in the hearts of us all, will not soon or readily be filled."

MR. FORKE

"The late Mr. Kennedy, I think, must very easily have impressed all new members as being a man of ability and character, whom it was well to know, a real man in every sense of the word. He undertook a great task and discharged it faithfully and creditably, and I am sure we all keenly regret his death. In Mr. Kennedy's decease the Prime Minister has lost a valuable friend and the government an able counsellor, while the country at large has suffered an equal loss."





# THE LATE HON. W. C. KENNEDY, M. P.

*(The Border Cities Star)*



THE Border Cities, the province, the nation, mourns the death of Hon. W. C. Kennedy, Minister of Railways and Canals in the cabinet of Rt.-Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King.

Here in his constituency his loss will be felt most poignantly. His death, so untimely, so stunning, has removed from our midst a man of infinite worth, a man of brilliant attainments, and, above all, a real friend.

It is difficult for North Essex and the Border Cities to realize that this kindly gentleman, this clever and capable business man, this able public servant, this prince of good fellows, has passed on. Only a week or two ago his friends here were privileged to shake his hand and congratulate him upon the seemingly remarkable recovery he had made from a long and trying illness. And now he is gone and sorrow settles like a black pall over the great district he loved so well.

For months while Mr. Kennedy fought a gallant battle for life in a Montreal hospital, the prayers and hopes of thousands of personal friends were with him. It is no exaggeration to say that he had thousands of personal friends. Few men in all Canada had a wider acquaintance and to know him was to be a friend. Even those who differed with him politically were proud to call themselves his friends, for the Minister of Railways was not of the type to make lasting enemies. Political opponents he had, aplenty, but when the rush and the bustle and the hard-hitting of the campaign were over, hands were shaken all around and nothing but the best of feeling reigned.

Probably the happiest moment in Mr. Kennedy's life was the occasion of the non-partisan reception tendered him some months ago in recognition of his appointment to the important portfolio of Railways and Canals. Those who attended the function in the Collegiate auditorium will never forget that night. It was the homecoming of

the Border Cities favorite son. Political friend and political foe joined hands in making the occasion the greatest of its kind in the history of the constituency. The people were proud of Mr. Kennedy and proud of the distinction he had brought to his riding. And one can never forget, too, the emotion with which he received the congratulations and good wishes, his modest and becoming references to what had been achieved and his whole-souled tribute to that wonderful woman—his wife. To think of him as we saw him then and to realize that we shall never shake his hand again, never look into his cheery face, never hear his hearty greeting, leaves one too sad for words.

And what shall we say to Mrs. Kennedy? What can we say? Our loss is great but her's far greater. The sun has gone out of her life. The one she loved, the one for whose health and happiness no sacrifice was too great, has been taken away. Yet, in the hour of anguish, there may be the comforting thought of the things he was able to accomplish during the all too few years allotted, of the good deeds done and of the happiness that was theirs, brief though its span. To Mrs. Kennedy the hearts of all of us go out. The devotion that she lavished upon her husband, her assistance during his political campaigns, her ever constant care for his health and happiness, stamped her as the ideal wife. For weeks she stood beside his bed in Montreal and cheered him bravely through a fight that seemed hopeless. When nurses, succumbing to the long strain, gave out, Mrs. Kennedy fought on. And now, with the struggle over, we can but shed the silent tear and grope for words that will not come.

Mr. Kennedy's career was not only fascinating, it was inspirational. From page boy in the Provincial Legislature to cabinet minister in the Federal Parliament, might well sum up in brief a brilliant political career. It might well serve as an inspiration to the youth of Canada, to urge them on to greater, better, higher attainments; to imbue them with the spirit of service, the noblest, loftiest, grandest of all duties

Mr. Kennedy was truly a self-made man, who pushed

himself to the top of the ladder by sheer hard work and native ability. In business, his life was a conspicuous success. In politics, his rise was meteoric. Entering public life in the famous election of 1917, he found himself, five years later, at the head of probably the most important department of the Canadian Government. It is given to few men to progress so rapidly. At Ottawa, as in the Border Cities and elsewhere, throughout the country, he was held in the highest esteem by men of all shades of political opinion. From 1917 until 1921 he was an Opposition member, but so winning was his personality, so great his capacity for making friends, that he was able to secure for his constituency and his constituents anything that might have been expected from even a member of the Cabinet. And when the administration of Mr Meighen was defeated and the reins of power passed to Mr. King, it was a forgone conclusion that the member for North Essex—returned, in the meantime, by an overwhelming majority—could have practically his choice of the departments. He chose—in customary Kennedy fashion—the most difficult task of all, the portfolio of Railways and Canals. When there was hard work to be done the late member for North Essex was not the kind of man to shirk it.

By experienced political observers, representative of various schools of thought, Mr. Kennedy was often referred to as the outstanding member of the King Government. Probably no man in all Canada possessed a more agile brain, a greater degree of alertness and far-sightedness or a more acute faculty for getting rapidly at the root of any problem and discovering the best method for solution. He was a master of finance, a genius in business.

William C. Kennedy was a politician in the best sense of the word. No man could gauge more accurately the drift of public opinion or estimate more correctly the effect that any political declaration or act of legislation would produce. His was the political seventh sense. In many ways, though, Mr. Kennedy departed from the ordinary methods of politics. It was these departures that helped to make him great. He did not, for instance, believe in criticism for the sake of



criticism. Some men argue that the duty of an Opposition in Parliament is to criticize on all and sundry occasions. This view was not shared by our late member. When he felt that there was room for criticism he was not hesitant in expressing his opinion. And it was expressed in no uncertain terms. On the other hand, he regarded Parliament as a body elected for the specific purpose of conducting public affairs rather than as a battle ground for opposing political parties. Consequently he was prepared to co-operate—when it appeared that co-operation was in the public interest. And because he was a co-operator, rather than an apostle of obstruction, Mr. Kennedy, while in Opposition, enjoyed the respect and esteem of his fellow members on the opposite benches. He possessed a charming personality. He had a fine appearance, a noble presence, and enjoyed to an unusual degree that power, invaluable to public men, of making those whom he encountered feel at home in his company. He was gracious to all.

Mr. Kennedy practised to a remarkable extent the third and most important of the three cardinal virtues—charity. Many hundreds of poor families in the Border Cities benefitted through the unostentatious big-heartedness of the late minister. He was one of the most enthusiastic supporters of the Goodfellows movement, and of every step calculated to make the lot of the unhappy easier to bear. In Mr. Kennedy the Children's Aid Society had a never failing friend, always ready to assist the organization with his purse and with his counsel.

Ottawa will miss Mr. Kennedy, all Canada will miss him, but it is here in North Essex and in the Border Cities particularly that the blow of his death comes with the greatest force. He loved North Essex and her people. There was nothing that he would not do for them and events have shown that there was little, at least, that they were not prepared to do for him. It was to this community that Mr. Kennedy came as a young man. He grew up with the district. Here he lived and played and worked and prospered and loved. Here he built his home and here he



expected to die, but that was denied him. Those who were there will remember his words at the Collegiate reception. When his days at Ottawa had come to an end—he had pointed to the uncertainties of politics—he was looking forward to the time when, with his dear wife, he would return to the old familiar scenes and here, surrounded by their friends, live on through the autumn and winter of human existence. That was his program. Nothing would have pleased him more, but, alas, it was not to be.

With all his ability, his resourcefulness and other talents that carried him so far at a comparatively early age, his human side remains as the one that will serve to keep his memory green forever in the hearts of old friends.

The Hon. William Costello Kennedy achieved national distinction but never ceased to be plain “Bill” Kennedy with the folks back home. He fawned upon no one and was not anxious to be fawned upon. Nothing could have been more repugnant to one of his disposition. He had no “side”, no false pride. If you were a friend of “Bill” Kennedy it mattered little to him whether you were a millionaire or a pauper. “Bill” Kennedy’s friends were real friends and he was a real friend to his friends! This community loses more than a distinguished parliamentary representative, it loses one of nature’s gentlemen whom everybody delighted to honor, and, above all, it loses—a man.

“Bill” Kennedy—our “Bill” Kennedy—we’ll miss you, old friend.



# THE DEATH OF W. C. KENNEDY

(*Toronto Globe*)



NEWS of the sudden death of Hon. William C. Kennedy, Minister of Railways and Canals, in Florida, whither he had gone, it was hoped, to recuperate after undergoing a serious operation in Montreal, will occasion deep regret to all Canadians, irrespective of party affiliations. Coming at this time, with the great enterprise of developing Canada's National Railways System confronting the country, the loss of such clear-headed, business-like and enthusiastic leadership as Mr. Kennedy was capable of supplying is essentially Dominion-wide.

Those who knew the Minister of Railways intimately recognize that he accepted his responsible post in no perfunctory spirit. He recognized that its duties would be onerous. He was fully conscious of the arduous effort which it must entail. He was keenly aware that he was confronted with a man's job and he was eager to do a man's share on it. In making his initial pronouncement of policy to the Parliament of Canada in April of last year Mr. Kennedy declared: "We realize the magnitude of our responsibility. We know what is expected of us. We wish to fulfil, on behalf of the Government and the people of Canada, these high expectations."

Mr. Kennedy possessed in large measure the qualities to perform the great task he had set himself. He had perseverance, industry, initiative and business acumen. He was determined to give the public ownership and operation of the vast National System a "full and fair trial," and he was known to have complete confidence that the policy would justify itself by results.

Mr. Kennedy has been called to rest ere his task was well under way. But he leaves the inspiration of a spirit that did not quail before difficulties, that did not shrink from hard work, that did not weaken under discouragement, that did not shirk responsibility. That is the Canadian spirit, and in his death Canada loses a worthy son.



## HON. W. C. KENNEDY

*(Mail and Empire)*



THE gap which Hon. W. C. Kennedy's death makes in the Cabinet is a very conspicuous one. He was prominent in virtue of the office he held, the Department over which he presided being one of the most important in the Administration. Even if his portfolio had been one ranking much lower in the general estimation, his death would have touched the public no less deeply, for in the political, social and business circles to which he belonged he was very highly esteemed. His personality made friends for him even among those whom he counted his strongest party adversaries. Mr. Kennedy was a very able and successful man of business. As a public administrator he was at least equal to the most capable of his colleagues in the Government. No Department offered more searching tests of the man at its head than the Department of Railways and Canals. For the right guidance of the affairs of that Department first-class business capacity was not the only thing required. That rarer quality, courage, was even more necessary for the settlement of the country's railway policy under the King Government. For that settlement the country is still waiting. The Grand Trunk system is not yet incorporated in the National System. It may turn out that but for Mr. Kennedy the Quebec section of the Government would have had the matter decided their way before this. That public ownership is still getting a trial may be owing to his stand.





# WILLIAM COSTELLO KENNEDY

(*Detroit News*)



IS intimate attachment to Detroit in innumerable ways is bound to reflect in this community the grief of our neighbor in the passing of William Costello Kennedy, Canadian Minister of Railways and Canals and Windsor's most imposing political figure.

His romantic rise from a page's place in the legislative halls of Toronto to incumbency of the Dominion's most intricate and important ministerial assignment is not an unfamiliar tale. But the swiftness with which his delayed personal participation in government culminated in the acquisition of great political prestige was entirely remarkable. His advent had been deferred until his election for North Essex to parliament in 1917. In the five years since he had amazed Canada with his grasp of federal financial affairs, his genius for organization, his quick adaptability to parliamentary ways, his handing of a prodigious cabinet task and his rise in the esteem of his party to the stature of potential timber for the Premiership. Altogether his leap to eminence was one of the most rapid in Canadian history.

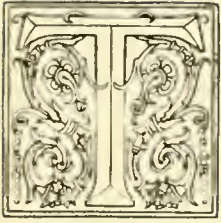
Mr. Kennedy combined in a unique manner political mindedness with business sense not commonly implied in that term. At the time of his death he was director of the world's most ambitious experiment in the government operation of railways. He had begun in a few months to lift the Canadian system from the shadow of bankruptcy to a distinctly more hopeful place. His business achievements alone would warrant him public regard. Supplementing this capacity with unerring political instinct had guaranteed him high fame.

To say this city feels his passing is merely to recount the instinctive poignant sense of irreparable loss descending on the Border Cities and Detroit with the word that he had gone.



## HON. W. C. KENNEDY'S DEATH

(*Montreal Gazette*)



THE sudden death of the Hon. W. C. Kennedy in Florida is regretted generally throughout Canada and no more sincerely than by those who were his political opponents. Comparatively young as a parliamentarian, Mr. Kennedy had, through his ability and the charm of his personality, won the esteem and affection of both Houses and of all parties. His selection for the important portfolio of Railways and Canals was regarded as a just recognition of his merit and was accepted by the public as a guarantee that the business of the Department would be conducted upon business lines. Unfortunately, ill-health prevented Mr. Kennedy from attending to his department duties except for a relatively short period last year, but he was long enough in harness to obtain a surprisingly complete grasp of the problems with which he had to deal, and to convince both his associates and his subordinates that the Department had at its head a strong administrator. A strange trick of fate brought the Minister of Railways and his immediate predecessor, the late Hon. J. A. Stewart, under the same roof in the battle for health which each waged gallantly but unsuccessfully. From the malady for which he was treated in Montreal Mr. Kennedy did, indeed, make what was regarded as a remarkable recovery, but the strain of his severe illness was evidently too much for a heart whose weakness was always a source of anxiety to his physicians. Mr. Kennedy's death makes the first gap in the Cabinet circle at Ottawa, and it comes upon the eve of the session, depriving his colleagues of counsel and help to which they had looked forward. Their loss is, in this instance, a loss to the country as a whole.





## HON. W. C. KENNEDY

(*Montreal Star*)



THE Honorable W. C. Kennedy, whose sudden death in Florida will come as a tragic blow to his many friends and with especial poignancy to his colleagues in the Cabinet, whose friendship he quickly won, belonged to the new order of politicians. Although pronounced in his Liberal opinions from boyhood, and firm in his convictions, Mr. Kennedy never belonged to the old order of dyed-in-the-wool politicians who believed that the sun shone only on their side of the fence and that his opponents were knaves of choice and of malice aforethought.

Mr. Kennedy had a very successful career in business before he turned his thought to active political life. He is believed to have accumulated a considerable fortune and he did this by strict devotion to business, by foresight and by a daring that amazed his associates. The accumulation of wealth did not satisfy Mr. Kennedy's ambition and he determined to enter the larger field of politics and to win fame there by the employment of the efficient methods which he had tried and proved in private affairs.

Mr. Kennedy's ambition was to go down in the history of Canada as the man who made a success of the Canadian National Railway system. He realized the magnitude of the task and none will gainsay the worthiness of such an ideal. During the year in which he acted as Minister of Railways Mr. Kennedy, although handicapped by ill-health, devoted all his energies and his abilities to his task. For his kindness, his unfailing courtesy, his broad grasp of difficult problems and his devotion to duty Mr. Kennedy deserves the admiration of his fellow-Canadians.



## W. C. KENNEDY'S BRILLIANT CAREER

(*Toronto Saturday Night*)



THE death of Hon. William Costello Kennedy before the completion of his fifty-fifth year is one of those tragedies which occasionally arise to remind ambitious men of what an old writer termed "the vanity of human wishes." No Canadian had risen more rapidly and suddenly to eminence in public life, no politician's advancement had been more fully attended by the approbation and good wishes of friends and opponents alike; yet almost from the day that he attained the eminence in which he died, he was doomed. Though the fact was known only to a few personal friends, the first violent warnings of the internal malady which carried him off were almost coincident with his taking the oath of office as Minister of Railways,—face to face with as difficult problems as have ever confronted a public man in this country. For six months he bravely dealt with the intricacies of the railway situation and when finally stricken last summer in a degree that rendered it improbable that he would ever be able to resume his duties, he left his department in such shape as to produce a hope that Canada's stupendous railway problem will one day be solved.

Those who knew "Billy" Kennedy in Toronto thirty years or more ago as a diligent young clerk in a loan company office and an ardent lacrosse player, hardly suspected that in middle age he would develop not only into a business man of rare executive power, but a public speaker of such skill and acumen as to score an immediate success in politics. In this field not merely his abilities, but his character, commanded instant respect. The tribute of Hon. Arthur Meighen who had Mr. Kennedy under observation as a brilliant and courteous enemy is as significant as that of his personal friend and associate Hon. W. L. M. King. Indeed Mr. Kennedy was credited with having been the counsellor who showed the present Prime Minister the path to victory.

It is said that when Mr. Kennedy first went to Windsor in 1897 to take a minor position with the Windsor Gas Company

he was so lonesome that he wrote back expressing his willingness to take any kind of a job in his home city of Toronto. But in 1897 times were hard and jobs were scarce, so he had to stay where he was. Within a few years he had become an eminent business man on the Essex peninsula, destined to become its leading public figure, and also to hold a place of high respect in the great city of Detroit, across the river. Though a "Dyed-in-the-wool-Grit" he was so free from political rancor that he was hardly regarded as an ardent partisan and his entry into politics as the candidate of a forlorn hope in the autumn of 1917 came as a surprise. He showed such platform ability that he carried the old Conservative riding of North Essex; and though the election proved the *debacle* of his chief, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, it proved the making of Mr. Kennedy as a public man. Sir Wilfrid was so bereft of followers that he could find no trained parliamentarian to act as financial critic, and in default of any one else asked the young business man from Windsor to undertake the task. Mr. Kennedy's speech on the budget during the session of 1918, by virtue of its fairness, shrewd analysis and adequacy of expression astonished the Union government; and it was at once realized that from the shattered Liberal forces had emerged a really big man. The member for North Essex was a pillar of strength to Mr. King when he became Sir Wilfrid's successor, not only in the House but in the caucus; and his personality inspired universal liking irrespective of party ties. It was no surprise therefore when in December 1921, Mr. Kennedy was asked to take the toughest job in the new administration, and did not quail. Of all Mr. King's selections for cabinet honors none other was received with such general approval. Then, as has been told above, the inscrutable decrees of fate laid him low.

Mr. Kennedy's brief career as a public servant was such that all Canada must sincerely regard his death as a national loss. Able, sincere, tolerant and manly, he enriched public life during his short tenure therein.



## THE LATE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS

(*Halifax Herald*)



HE sudden and we would judge unexpected death of the Hon. W. C. Kennedy, Minister of Railways for Canada, will be widely regretted. It is a striking fact that within twelve months two prominent public men, both numbering hosts of personal friends and admirers within the ranks of their supporters and opponents—Hon. J. A. Stewart, who was Minister of Railways in the Meighen government, and Hon. Mr. Kennedy, his successor to that position—should have passed away. Both were for weeks at the same time in the Royal Victoria Hospital at Montreal. Hon. Mr. Stewart was the first to be called hence. Hon. Mr. Kennedy appeared to have made a successful fight against the maladies that threatened his life ; and had gone to a southern part of the United States with good hope of complete recovery. But it was not so willed. He succumbed on Wednesday to heart failure.

The late Minister was a relatively young man—in his fifty-fifth year. He was also a comparatively young member of the House of Commons—elected first in 1917. But he at once took a prominent place in the councils of his party, and was regarded in the House of Commons as a man who would win promotion. He did not have very long to wait. The change of government in 1921 brought him advancement to the Office of Minister of Railways and Canals.

He did not have much opportunity to display his executive powers, having been laid aside with illness soon after the close of his first parliamentary session ; but his conduct of the affairs of his department gave promise of good business administration. His statement of Canada's railway situation during the session was generally regarded as a review of great merit.

In private life the late Minister was highly respected; and he had many personal friends amongst his political opponents. Men of his ability and likeliness are of value in public life, and are greatly missed.





## HON. W. C. KENNEDY

(*Winnipeg Tribune*)



CANADA has suffered a distinct loss in the death of William Costello Kennedy, Minister of Railways in the Mackenzie King Government. Of all the members in that government none had higher ideals of public service and none brought to bear upon the country's problems a better business brain than Mr. Kennedy. He was of a type all too rare in Canadian public affairs—a business man, successful in a high degree in his personal affairs, who relinquished business for the sake of rendering public service, and brought to these a mind equipped with an unusual degree of sound commonsense and good business judgment.

He did not enjoy the opportunity of displaying his ability to full advantage, for the reason that he had only succeeded in familiarizing himself with the work in hand in his department before he was taken ill. What he did have time to do gave every indication of successful administration of the railways under his charge, but his death prevents fulfilment of the promise.

There are influences in the Mackenzie King Government adverse to the success of the Canadian National Railways. Mr. Kennedy was regarded by those who knew his fine qualities as a bulwark in this connection. As long as he remained at the head of the railway department there was assurance that the railways would have a fair chance. It is most regrettable that his death brought his guardianship of the railways to an end at a time when they are still in great need of it.

Windsor, an industrial community normally Conservative, idolized Mr. Kennedy. There was no jealousy of his wealth or his business success. All classes held him in the highest regard for his fine qualities, and he was "Bill" to the whole community.

Office-boy in Toronto, clerk, branch manager of a financial house, industrial magnate, member of parliament, minister of railways—his death cuts short a career still full of promise.



## LATE HON. W. C. KENNEDY

*(Quebec Telegraph)*



HERE is an element of almost heroic tragedy in the circumstances attending the sad death at Naples, Florida, of the Hon. W. C. Kennedy, Minister of Railways and Canals, in the Dominion Parliament. He was known to be suffering from a serious malady for a considerable time, and yet rather than leave his department at a critical period, he struggled on until, as his untimely death has proved, the trouble from which he suffered secured such a grip upon him, that the final operation performed in Montreal, could not keep the grim reaper from his harvest. Though comparatively a new man in higher political strata of the country the name of the late Hon. W. C. Kennedy has long been associated with progressive undertakings of a large scale. He was, in fact, a man measuring well up to the stature of statecraft long before the call came to him, but when it did come at last it found him already equipped with all the essentials of his office. To lose him at such a time as this, when the railway situation of the country is launching forth upon what may be regarded as its great and ultimate test, is almost irreparable, and Canada has occasion to mourn him in this respect, as well as in the narrower one bounded by the passing of a genuine personality.





## THE FUNERAL ORATION



THE full text of the funeral oration delivered this morning by Rev. Fr. Charles E. Coughlin, C.S.B., of Assumption College, Sandwich, during the Solemn Requiem Mass for Mr. Kennedy at St. Alphonsus Church, is as follows :

“We have assembled this morning to pay the last religious tribute to William Costello Kennedy. (May his soul rest in peace!) As is usual on such solemn occasions, discreet silence is more golden in its eloquence than are intruding words of praise or lamentation. Silence—because our heads are bowed with a national grief; silence—because our hearts are in sympathy with her and with them who were dearest to him ;—silence—because we are appalled before this present manifestation of death.

“But, because he whom we mourn played no small part in our national life; because he was the admired of all, despite their political, their religious, or their national bonds, it seems fitting that his name should be mentioned thus in public, although his humility, the mother of all his virtues, should prefer that silence should be his eulogist.

“To my country’s leaders and to my fellow citizens the death of our mutual friend has come with the sharp shock of an irreparable loss. There lies the fleshly dust of him who assisted so mightily in fashioning the present government. The judicious, amiable, energetic soul has fled to the world beyond. Behind he has left a most burdensome office. However, our national grief is somewhat assuaged when we contemplate that, in his brief sojourn in parliament, there was honesty of intention and of action to mark his daily life; there was justice and charity to characterize his dealings with his fellow men; there was unselfish devotion to his country’s cause to stamp his sterling policy. These virtues, my friends, no tomorrow can effectually efface from the memory of his colleagues.

“Moreover, the magnificent character of the man which has received so much publicity in the truthful eulogies of our press cannot but build up in the hearts of the citizens a castle

of confidence—confidence in those chosen legislators whom William Kennedy so loved; confidence in the men who weave the destiny of our nation. His death has not been in vain. It has heralded abroad the message that members of parliament aim at, ends which are their country's, their God's, and truth's.

“Cold words of sympathy are these for his friends. Little do they soothe the many children of this and of other cities who were blessed by his charity; some other kind benefactor must be their helper. Poor argument it is to offer to his sisters, who were so attached to such an illustrious and loving brother. Weak, shallow sympathy it is to lay to her heart who glorified most in his triumphs and who grieves most in his death; may her tears of sorrow become pearls of sacrifice before the throne of her God.

“True it is that death always seems to aim with fouler spite at fairer marks. But if reason is limp in the hour of need, our Christian faith, however, is strong to console. You who are most bereaved are not forgetful of the story of Love's seeming contradiction. Every page of human history repeats its lesson. It is a simple fact. It is that those whom Christ loves most, suffer most. Christ who loved Peter, caressed him with an upturned cross. St. John's love was priced with a boiling cauldron. He kissed His Blessed Mother and sealed it with the Seven Swords of Sorrow. It has been so all down the centuries; love of God and God's love for us go hand in hand with sorrow. Oh! if human wisdom shrinks from attempting to assuage the wounds of grief, Christ's wisdom and example can fill them up with the oil of His love.

“His life is spent.—Life! What word is that which we so glibly use? Is it the measure of time which we pass between the cradle and the grave? Is it the pleasures of childhood and youth, the success of manhood, the respect and cheerful memories which are the mead of old age? Not so, my friends. There are too many lives of pleasureless childhood; there are too many lives of failure, of disappointed manhood. Too often the cup of old age has contained naught but the dregs of remorse, of loneliness, of poverty. In life's

formula, then, there is not required that there be the fame of the great, the jewels of the rich, or the pleasures—even be they honest—of the worldling. Christ had them not. Yet He said: “I am the resurrection and the life.”

“The true interpretation of the mystery of life, then, must be found in Christ. He, the resurrection, who unsealed the tomb of Lazarus; He who burst the bonds of His own charnel house and came forth with healthy glow upon His brow; with manly vigor in His stride; with immortality gleaming in His body and soul—He has given the pledge to every one of His brothers that they, too, shall tingle again with the pulsing fire of life. Life! Yes, the life which is to come!

“This present existence is merely a preparation for the joys which are to come. In that fair country of God’s kingdom, whose flag of love shall never be furled, life shall be unmeasured by time, unlimited in friendship and inestimable in happiness. It is the crown which is reserved for those who have been brave enough upon this earth to be honest, to be truthful, to be pure, to be faithful—to be like Christ. It is a crown be-gemmed with the love of God; a crown which raises the meanest pauper, be he Christ-like, to the dignity of a prince of Heaven, a son of God!

“Thanks to Christ, death is not the end-all, the be-all. It is but the open portal to eternity—to an eternity of remorse for those who, disregarding their Creator, would make gods of themselves and a heaven of this world;—to an eternity of happiness for those others who steer the bark of their soul along the way of Christ, whose captain is truth, whose port of destination is lighted by the star of faith.—“I am the Way, the Truth and the Light.”

“William Kennedy! those who knew you best believe that your mortal days were spent in accord with the commandments of God and the faith of your church. Were your silent tongue able, it would forbid me to speak with praise of the good deeds which you considered to be your dutiful deeds. I shall be silent. I shall ask of your friends what you would implore of them were that tongue able to voice the request—prayers for your immortal soul!

“Our faith begs us, my dear friends, to pray for the dead. Perhaps he for whom we mourn is still biding some time midway between earth and Heaven, in a place which we have called purgatory. There, perchance, he is being purified before the crown of God’s love shall be his passport to enjoy ‘what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart to conceive.’ And if we shall remember him tenderly ; if we shall be mindful of his graciousness, his goodness, his holiness, let our memorials rise up in flames of prayer so that God will speed his joys.

“Adieu ! thou manly soul. ‘May flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.’ And ye whose charge it is to bear his corpse to yonder grave, tread holily ; for once, a few short days ago, that body was the temple of the Holy Ghost. Place him gently in the snow-clad grave. Although the winter’s winds are sobbing in sad requiem, clothe him in the earth—the earth which soon in springtime days shall deck his resting place with lilies of hope, with roses of love—both pledges of immortality. Oh lips so truthful, though ye be closed and cold ; Oh heart so loving though your pulse is still, some day too, your second spring of life eternal shall begin ; some day shall ye throb again with life and happiness through the power of Him who is the resurrection and the life !”





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